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771 some local deities. They also practise Ancestor Worship, there being a real distinction between the manner and the places in which the gods are worshipped, and those in which the rites of Ancestor Worship are performed.

771 356 One further source of confusion, not unrelated to the notion of "three religions" must be discussed. It is the common experience of all travellers in China, both Yunnan and other provinces, to find temples in poor repair, or ill-kept, and the attitude of the people to this neglect is one of casual unconcern. More than this, the people themselves seem to the European to have no reverence for their gods or their shrines. Men will eat meat and drink rice wine in a Buddhist temple, although wine and meat are forbidden to the Buddhist; they will allow anyone to occupy the shrine itself for a night's lodging, and they laugh, spit on the floor, and behave in an irreverent manner anywhere in the temple precincts. The traveller, or the missionary, who thinks of his own behaviour in a church, is shocked at this conduct and comes to believe that these peoples lack all true spiritual understanding, and practise three religions because they are incapable of devotion to any creed. Chinese of the educated classes, who are in fact agnostics, and hostile to the old religion as a survival of pre-revolutionary China, tend to confirm this opinion. But it is none the less mistaken.

771 If temples are neglected, they are also repaired, even rebuilt, and by public subscription. Hard earned money is spent by farmers who can ill afford any luxury. Women and girls will make long journeys to a temple on the day of festival, and spend relatively considerable sums of money on incense to burn at the shrines. Immense numbers of people collect at the temple festivals, and if many come for pleasure or recreation, great numbers also come to worship. It is not compulsion which brings the crowds and draws their money, for the government is at best indifferent, at worst